

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 231696 TOSEC 270368

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DRAFTED BY NEA:ALATHERTON,JR./ADUBS:NEA/EGY:GBEYER:LAB

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 231696 TOSEC 270368

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, IS, EG, US

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: TALKS WITH ISRAELIS ON
AMOCO (S/S NO. 7619687)

REFS: (A) SECTO 27168, (B) CAIRO 12619, (C) TOSEC 270296

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM ATHERTON

1. AFTER RECEIVING CONFIRMATION THAT YOUR MESSAGE TO FAHMY WAS BEING DELIVERED TO HIM VIA HIS CHEF DE CABINET OSAMA AL-BAZ, I CALLED DINITZ, IN ACCORDANCE WITH YOUR INSTRUCTIONS, TO RECORD OUR VIEW THAT THE ISRAELI POSITION IS INTERNALLY CONTRADICTORY AND THAT IT WAS NOT WHAT WE HAD UNDERSTOOD WOULD COME OUT OF THESE TALKS. I ALSO UNDERLINED THAT WE CONTINUE TO REGARD THE ISRAELI POSITION AS UNACCEPTABLE. DINITZ SAID THAT THE OUTCOME OF THE DISCUSSIONS ALSO DID NOT MEET THEIR EXPECTATIONS.

2. I THEN INFORMED DINITZ OF THE CHANGES THAT YOU WISHED MADE IN THE PRESS GUIDANCE. HE SAID HE HAD NO PROBLEM. I

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 231696 TOSEC 270368

REMINDED DINITZ THAT WE WERE NOT ISSUING THIS PRESS LINE

AS A FORMAL STATEMENT AND THAT WE WOULD NOT BE DOING ANY
BACKGROUND BRIEFING OR

GOING INTO ANY DETAILS REGARDING THE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS
THAT HAD TAKEN PLACE. DINITZ SAID THEY WOULD ALSO STICK
TO THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF THE PRESS GUIDANCE AND THAT
THEY WISHED TO AVOID A WAR OF WORDS. NEVERTHELESS,
DINITZ ADDED, IF ANY ELABORATING DETAILS APPEAR IN THE
PRESS THE ISRAELIS WOULD HAVE TO DEFEND THEMSELVES. I
REPLIED THAT IF THE DETAILS ARE LEAKED FROM THE ISRAELI
SIDE, THEN WE WOULD HAVE TO PUT OUT OUR LEGAL POSITION
AND THE PROBLEMS THAT WE HAD WITH THEIR POSITIONS. WE
DID NOT WANT TO DO THAT. DINITZ ASSURED ME THAT THE
ISRAELIS WILL NOT BRIEF IN ANY WAY, ON-THE-RECORD OR ON
BACKGROUND, AND THAT THIS WOULD BE HIS EXPLICIT
INSTRUCTIONS. I TOLD DINITZ THAT WE WOULD BE INFORMING
THE COMPANY ABOUT OUR TALKS IN GENERAL TERMS ONLY AND
THAT WE WOULD URGE IT NOT TO AGITATE THIS MATTER AND THAT
BOTH SIDES WISHED TO AVOID AIRING THE DETAILS PUBLICLY.
ANY AIRING OF THE DETAILS, WE WOULD TELL THE COMPANY,
WOULD ONLY MAKE YOUR DISCUSSIONS WITH ALLON MORE
DIFFICULT.

3. WE HAVE INFORMED AMOCO'S OFFICE IN CHICAGO OF THE
OUTCOME OF THE TALKS ALONG LINES SUGGESTED IN TOSEC
270296 (MINUS THE PERSONAL NOTES) AND OF OUR AGREEMENT
WITH THE ISRAELIS NOT TO FEED THE PRESS ON THIS SUBJECT.

4. IN VIEW OF OUR AGREEMENT TO AVOID ANY EXACERBATION OF
THE ISSUE THROUGH CONTENTIOUS PRESS ARTICLES, I BELIEVE
IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE FREE MATTHEWS GET AN ORAL
MESSAGE TO FAHMY REPORTING ON OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE
ISRAELIS ON THIS MATTER AND EXPRESSING THE HOPE THAT THE
EGYPTIANS WOULD ALSO ASSUME A SIMILAR POSTURE. FOLLOWING
FOR YOUR REVIEW IS A PROPOSED TELEGRAM TO CAIRO WHICH
COVERS THE PRESS ISSUE AND A COUPLE OF MATTERS RESPONSIVE
TO CABLES FROM MATTHEWS.

5. PROPOSED TELEGRAM TO CAIRO

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 231696 TOSEC 270368

SECRET

ACTION: IMMEDIATE CAIRO

EXDIS

FOR CHARGE FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, IS, EG, US

SUBJECT: FOLLOW-UP TO TALKS WITH ISRAELIS ON AMOCO

REF: CAIRO 12619

IN MANNER YOU DEEM MOST APPROPRIATE, REQUEST YOU PASS ON FOLLOWING ORAL MESSAGE FROM ME TO FAHMY AND PROVIDE HIM WITH PRESS GUIDANCE WE ARE FOLLOWING (SEPTTEL) RE SEPTEMBER 16-17 U.S.-ISRAELI TALKS. QUOTE: I AM MOST APPRECIATIVE OF THE GOE'S DECISION TO EXTEND AMOCO'S TIME LIMIT FOR DRILLING AT SITE 304.1, IN ORDER NOT TO PENALIZE AMOCO FOR MATTERS BEYOND ITS CONTROL. THIS GESTURE OF ACCOMMODATION WILL BE HELPFUL TO ME WHEN I PURSUE THIS ISSUE FURTHER WITH ALLON. NO PRECISE DATE HAS BEEN FIXED FOR THAT MEETING, BUT IT SHOULD TAKE PLACE WITHIN A WEEK OR SO AFTER SEPTEMBER 27. I WANTED YOU TO KNOW, TOO, THAT WE HAVE INSISTED WITH THE ISRAELIS THAT IT IS NECESSARY TO AVOID ANY PRESS AGITATION OF THIS ISSUE IN THE BELIEF THAT THIS WOULD ONLY RESULT IN A HARDENING OF POSITIONS AND MAKE MY TALKS WITH ALLON MORE DIFFICULT. I HOPE, THEREFORE, THAT ANY DISCUSSION IN THE EGYPTIAN PRESS WILL ALSO BE RESTRAINED IN AN EFFORT TO FACILITATE FINDING A PRACTICAL SOLUTION TO THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM AT HAND, AND THAT IN PARTICULAR ANY REFERENCE BE AVOIDED TO OCTOBER 31 DEADLINE ON SITE 304.1 COMMUNICATED TO MATTHEWS BY HILAL. UNQUOTE.

FYI: DEPARTMENT INFORMED HANK BOSWELL OF AMOCO HEAD-QUARTERS IN CHICAGO SATURDAY MORNING (SEPTEMBER 18) OF OUTCOME OF OUR TALKS WITH ISRAELIS ALONG SAME LINES AS
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 231696 TOSEC 270368

THOSE IN MESSAGE TO FAHMY, MINUS, OF COURSE, PERSONAL NOTES. AGREED PRESS GUIDANCE WAS READ TO BOSWELL WITH REQUEST THAT AMOCO ALSO CONTINUE NOT RPT NOT TO MAKE PRESS ISSUE OF THIS MATTER AT PRESENT. WE ALSO INFORMED AMOCO THAT GOE HAS GRANTED EXTENSION OF EXPIRATION DATE, ACCORDING EMBASSY CAIRO REPORT, OF ITS CONCESSION IN BLOCK 304 FOR FORTY-FIVE DAYS FROM SEPTEMBER 17 (UNTIL OCTOBER 31). WE ARE URGING AMOCO TO MAKE NO PUBLIC REFERENCE TO THIS NEW DATE AND YOU SHOULD MAKE SAME POINT TO AMOCO-EGYPT.

BOSWELL SAID HE WAS VERY DISCOURAGED THAT TALKS HAD NOT BEEN MORE SUCCESSFUL. HE PERSONALLY FEELS, HE SAID, THAT

AMOCO HAS "LOST THIS BATTLE BY NOT TAKING ISSUE TO THE

PRESS." THE ONLY THING AMOCO SEEMS TO HAVE GAINED AT THIS POINT IS FORTY-FIVE DAY EXTENSION ON THEIR CONCESSION AT COURTESY OF MINISTER PETROLEUM HILAL. WE MADE POINT THAT AMOCO HAD GAINED MORE THAN THAT; NAMELY, THAT SECRETARY WOULD BE TAKING MATTER UP WITH ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER. BOSWELL AGREED TO RELAY INFORMATION TO PRESIDENT ADAMS AS WELL AS OUR OFFER TO DISCUSS AMOCO CONCERNS IN GREATER DETAIL IN WASHINGTON EARLY NEXT WEEK WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM AMOCO. END FYI. END TEXT.

6. RECOMMENDATION: THAT YOU APPROVE THE FOREGOING TELEGRAM TO CAIRO.

APPROVE..... DISAPPROVE.....

7. DRAFTED: NEA:ALATHERTON,JR./ADUBS:NEA/EGY:GBEYER:LAB
CLEARANCES: S:RAHERNE; S/S:SESTEINER.

ROBINSON

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